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# Implementation of Security Council resolutions 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014)

## Report of the Secretary-General

## I. Introduction

1. This eleventh report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 17 of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) and paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 2191 (2014), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report, every 30 days, on the implementation of the resolutions by all parties to the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.

2. The report covers the period from 1 to 31 December 2014. The information contained in the report is based on the data available to United Nations actors on the ground and reports from open sources and from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. Data from United Nations agencies on their humanitarian deliveries have been reported for the period 1 December to 31 December in line with their monthly reporting cycle, to allow for verification of data. More recent data have been included when available, including on cross-border operations and deliveries to besieged communities.

## II. Major developments

### A. Political/military

3. Widespread conflict and high levels of violence continued throughout the Syrian Arab Republic during the reporting period, particularly in the governorates of Aleppo, Hama, Homs, Deir ez-Zor, Rif Dimashq, Damascus, Hasakeh, Idlib, Dar`a, Quneitra and Raqqa. Indiscriminate aerial bombings, including the use of barrel bombs, by Government forces and indiscriminate shelling by armed opposition, extremist and listed terrorist groups,[1] continued to result in deaths, injuries and the displacement of civilians. Use of improvised explosive devices and vehicle-borne

[1] On 30 May 2013, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and the Nusra Front were designated as terrorist groups by the Security Council under resolution 1267 (1999). The two groups operate in the Syrian Arab Republic.



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improvised explosive devices increased, and more than 21 suicide operations were reported in Aleppo, Hama and Dar`a.

4. Severe levels of violence were reported in Dar`a, killing at least 200 people, including 37 children and 16 women, during December. The cities of Ankhil and Dar`a, the towns of Sheik Meskin, Jasem, Deir al-Adas, Hrak, Samlin, Alma, Namer, Kafr Nasej al-Tiha, Da`el, Harrah and Busra al-Sham were the most affected by barrel bombs and other forms of aerial attacks and shelling.

5. In the governorate of Aleppo, aerial bombardment and shelling of opposition-controlled eastern Aleppo continued during the reporting period. At least 107 civilians, including 27 children, were reportedly killed in Aleppo governorate during December as a result of aerial attacks and shelling.

6. In Rif Dimashq, Government aerial bombardment against opposition-held areas continued during December. The districts of Douma, Hamouria, Khan el-Sheikh and Zabadani have been the most affected. For example, on 8 December, two airstrikes struck the homes of civilians in the town of Hamouria, in eastern Ghouta, reportedly killing at least eight civilians and wounding dozens of others, including women and children. On 11 December, at least one farmer and two local women were wounded in the area of Wadi Barada, when Government forces opened direct fire against them.

7. In the governorate of Homs, at least four civilians, including a child, were killed on 31 December in the district of Waer as a result of Government shelling. On the same day, 5 civilians were reported killed and 11 injured in the city of Rastan, as a result of a barrel bomb dropped in the centre of the city.

8. During the first week of January, the Syrian Arab Armed Forces reportedly used surface-to-surface rockets on Jobar, Darayya and other opposition-held areas in Ghouta, Damascus governorate. Armed opposition groups responded by firing more than 50 rockets and mortars on Damascus neighbourhoods. Media and medical sources reported that at least 2 people were killed and 18 wounded.

9. Yarmouk and its surrounding areas experienced a serious escalation in armed conflict during the reporting period, involving frequent exchanges of fire and use of explosive munitions, including by groups inside Yarmouk. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) received unconfirmed reports of civilian casualties, including fatalities, as a result of the deterioration in the security situation. In late December, there were credible reports that three civilian volunteers supporting aid distribution inside Yarmouk were killed by armed groups.

10. The Nusra Front reportedly continues to attract additional fighters and resources, particularly in Idlib and Dar`a governorates. In mid-December Ahrar al-Sham, the Nusra Front and other armed groups took control of two strategic military bases in Wadi al-Daif and Hamidiyah in Idlib. They also surrounded Abou al-Dohour airport in rural Idlib and targeted roads between Hama and Aleppo and Idlib and Ladhiqiyah, reinforcing their presence in rural Hama. On 2 December, the Nusra Front, Ahrar al-Sham and Jaish al-Islam agreed to form a unified leadership council, a joint operations room and a Sharia court in the Qalamoun region.

11. Parties to the conflict continued to target civilian facilities, including vital services and infrastructure. In late December, the Nusra Front and possibly other

armed groups cut electricity and water supplies in Idlib and Aleppo cities, affecting approximately 1.7 million people. The electricity and water supplies were restored on 30 December, after the parties reached an agreement. Non-governmental organization (NGO) partners reported attacks on two schools in Idlib governorate, as well as on an internally displaced persons (IDP) centre, resulting in death and injury to civilians, including children.

12. International coalition airstrikes against ISIL led by the United States of America continued throughout the reporting period, targeting mostly ISIL positions in Kobani. Fighting also intensified between ISIL and Kurdish forces, with ISIL reportedly incurring heavy losses. In early December, a second group of 150 Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga forces entered Kobani to replace the first group deployed to support Syrian Kurdish forces. A Jordanian military pilot, who was on an international coalition mission against ISIL, was captured by ISIL on 24 December, following the crash of his military aircraft in Raqqa governorate.

13. The United Nations continued to receive requests from opposition representatives to help facilitate local agreements with the Government in Damascus (Yarmouk, Jobar), Rif Dimashq (Zabadani, Darayya) and northern rural Hama. In Waer, Homs, opposition groups started direct negotiations with the Government allegedly following threats of increased shelling and air strikes.

14. Civilians continued to be displaced as a result of the conflict. During December at least 40,000 people fled clashes in Sheikh Meskin in western rural Dar'a governorate, seeking refuge in the surrounding villages of Deli, Barka and Sakeia, as well as Izra, Dar'a city, Shajara and Tel Shihab. In north-western Quneitra governorate, clashes intensified in the Hamedia area, in close proximity to Khan Arnabah city, host to a large number of IDPs. Recent attacks in that area during December resulted in the displacement of thousands of civilians.

15. Efforts continued to find a political solution to the conflict, and consultations continued with the Syrian parties and a wide range of interlocutors inside and outside the Syrian Arab Republic on the parameters of the proposed "freeze" arrangements to start in Aleppo City. Special Envoy de Mistura visited Istanbul and Gaziantep and met with the Syrian Opposition Coalition and armed opposition groups to explain the difference between the proposed Aleppo freeze and previous local ceasefire initiatives. Special Envoy de Mistura also visited Saudi Arabia and Jordan, and briefed the European Union Foreign Affairs Council on the modalities of the freeze proposal. During the same period, Deputy Special Envoy Ramzy visited Tehran and then Damascus to launch another round of negotiations on the freeze proposal.

16. In his discussions, Special Envoy de Mistura recalled that the freeze was intended to be accompanied by initiatives to normalize civilian life. The proposal respects the unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and relevant Security Council resolutions. It is not a substitute for, but rather a building block towards, an all-inclusive national political process, without preconditions, within the framework of the Geneva communiqué.

## B. Human rights

17. The Office for the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to receive allegations of arbitrary detention, torture and ill

treatment at the hands of various Syrian security agencies, including the Political Security, Air Force Intelligence, Military Intelligence and State Security branches in areas under Government control. During the reporting period, OHCHR received allegations of torture and ill treatment at the following locations in Damascus: Military Intelligence branches 215 and 248; Military Police in Qaboun; Military Hospital 601; Teshrin Military Hospital; Air Force Intelligence in Harasta; and Air Force Intelligence at Mezzeh Airport. OHCHR also received testimonies concerning the Military Security, Air Force Intelligence and State Security branches in Homs city, and Military Security Branch 325 in Ladhiqiyeh, as well as reports of arbitrary detention of Syrian citizens near the border with Lebanon. At least eight individuals were detained on separate occasions by Political Security personnel at the Masna'a border crossing during December. The detainees were reportedly kept at the border point on the Syrian side before being picked up by Air Force Intelligence or Political Security, both located in the Mezzeh area of Rif Dimashq. Two Syrian human rights activists, who were detained by Political Security personnel on 30 October at the border as they attempted to return home after attending a human rights workshop in Beirut, were released on bail on 17 December. OHCHR will monitor future court proceedings.

18. Information received by OHCHR indicates that Military Security Branch 325, Ladhiqiyah, continued to detain individuals for expressing dissent, including for posting anti-government statements on social media or for being found with anti-government images or statements on their mobile phones. According to information gathered by OHCHR, the Homs Central Prison houses at least 2,000 detainees held since 2011 owing to their participation in anti-government peaceful protests.

19. According to information received by OHCHR, the Kurdish People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel) (YPG) continues to recruit child soldiers. On 29 December, OHCHR received video footage depicting a 15-year-old girl allegedly in a YPG camp in Hasakeh. Representatives of the Kurdish Autonomous Administration have, in the past, pledged to eradicate the practice.

20. It was reported to CHCHR on 3 December that ISIL stoned a man accused of adultery to death in Fayhaa Square in the town of Bokamal, in Deir ez-Zor. On 9 December, ISIL reportedly executed four men in Bokamal. According to local sources, ISIL representatives posted a sign by the bodies of the victims justifying the killing as a punishment for "attacking positions of the Islamic State". On 10 December, ISIL released a public statement and pictures of the execution of a man accused of homosexuality in Deir ez-Zor. The exact date and location of the incident has not been confirmed. On 19 December, ISIL reportedly executed a Kurdish man in Raqqa for making blasphemous remarks. OHCHR also received information that 20 bodies of members of the Shaitaat tribe, allegedly killed by ISIL, were found on 29 December near the Railroad and Electricity Company in the town of Ghranij, on the eastern rural outskirts of Deir ez-Zor. On 30 December ISIL reportedly abducted eight civilians in the village of Ashara, Deir ez-Zor. The abductees included community leaders from the Akidat tribe.

21. Members of the International Commission of Inquiry, OHCHR and United Nations human rights monitors continued to be denied access to the country.

## C. Humanitarian access

22. The humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic has continued to deteriorate, with 12.2 million people requiring assistance. Nearly 3.8 million people have been forced to flee the country as refugees, and approximately 7.6 million people — almost half of the Syrian population — are now internally displaced.

23. Despite the extremely challenging operating environment, United Nations humanitarian agencies and partners continued to deliver assistance to people in need. In December, the World Food Programme (WFP) dispatched food for over 3.6 million people across 12 governorates. The World Health Organization (WHO) distributed medicines and supplies for nearly 484,000 people in 7 governorates. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) reached an estimated 1.5 million people with potable water, sanitation and hygiene assistance. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reached 476,418 people with core relief items. The International Organization for Migration reached around 38,400 people with non-food items. Approximately 62,240 people received agricultural support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The United Nations Population Fund supported 40,600 people with reproductive health care.

24. Two inter-agency convoys with humanitarian assistance were dispatched during the reporting period. On 7 December, a convoy with supplies for 3,000 people was delivered to Government-controlled Mamoura, Rif Dimashq. On 16 December the first of a two-part inter-agency convoy went to opposition-controlled Talbiseh and the Government-held Mishrefeh area in Homs governorate. The convoy included 10,000 WFP family food rations (9,000 to Talbiseh and 1,000 to Mishrefeh) to support up to 50,000 people in the two areas. The second part of the convoy included an additional 2,000 food rations for 10,000 people and was scheduled to take place on 18 December to the same locations. Approval is awaited.

25. In addition, agencies reached at least 536,300 people with humanitarian supplies via cross line operations to Aleppo, Homs, Hasakeh and Rif Dimashq, including food for 194,500 people, non-food items for over 5,200 people and medical treatments for over 196,600 people.

26. As at 13 January, the United Nations and its partners had sent 54 shipments — 40 from Turkey and 14 from Jordan — to the Syrian Arab Republic under the terms of resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014). These included food assistance for almost 596,000 people; non-food items for around 522,000 people; water and sanitation supplies for over 280,000 people; and medical supplies for 462,000 people. Many of the medical supplies shipped were reusable and will benefit more patients in the next few months. Other assistance (including school supplies) was delivered for 9,900 people. In line with resolutions 2165 (2014) and 2191 (2014), the United Nations notified the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in advance of each shipment, including details of content, destination district and number of beneficiaries, confirming the humanitarian nature of the shipment.

27. The United Nations monitoring mechanism continued its activities in Turkey and Jordan. Efforts to deploy a team in Iraq continue, but operations remain pending owing to continued insecurity. The monitoring mechanism continued to benefit from excellent cooperation and support from the Governments of Turkey and Jordan.

28. As was the case in the previous reporting period, relief items continue to be urgently needed in Hasakeh governorate. In response, UNICEF airlifted 385 tons of supplies to Qamishli during December, including nutrition, education, medical care, water, sanitation and hygiene supplies for at least 100,000 people, half of them children. The Nusaybin/Qamishli border crossing continues to be used with the consent of the Governments of Turkey and the Syrian Arab Republic. After obtaining approval from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in December, WFP delivered 46,000 food rations for 227,000 people in Hasakeh governorate.

29. NGOs continued to deliver urgent food, health, sanitation and other assistance in the Syrian Arab Republic, reaching nearly 1.5 million people in December, including through the provision of ongoing services. This included around 640,000 people in Idlib, 555,000 in Aleppo and over 94,000 in Hasakeh governorates. NGOs experienced significant challenges passing checkpoints and providing assistance to people in need in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates. Assistance was delivered to 8,164 people and 25,289 people, respectively.

30. Widespread fighting across the country, administrative hurdles and lack of agreement by the parties continued to constrain humanitarian access across the country, affecting humanitarian capacity to deliver at planned scale. In addition to locations in Rif Dimashq, Hama, Homs, Dar'a, Quneitra, Aleppo and Idlib governorates that could not be accessed in December with food deliveries, the entire governorates of Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor remained inaccessible, preventing 600,000 people from receiving food assistance. In Raqqa successful negotiations with armed actors through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and local community leaders enabled WFP to deliver food for just over 35,000 civilians in November before increased insecurity and unsuccessful negotiations with all parties to the conflict cut access again in December. In Deir ez-Zor, negotiations between armed actors and WFP partners were unsuccessful, preventing all humanitarian deliveries into the governorate since May 2014.

**Besieged areas**

31. Of the 4.8 million people in hard-to-reach areas, some 212,000 people remain besieged in the Syrian Arab Republic, with 185,500 people besieged by Government forces in eastern Ghouta, Darayya and Yarmouk and another 26,500 people besieged by opposition forces in Nabul and Zahraa.

32. During the reporting period, two besieged communities were reached with food distributed to 2,544 people (1.2 per cent of the 212,000 people in besieged areas); non-food items distributed to 2,540 people (1.2 per cent); and medical assistance distributed to 1,280 people (0.6 per cent), in addition to vaccines.

33. In eastern Ghouta, some 163,500 people remain besieged. Unconfirmed reports in January that some people, including civilians, had been enabled to evacuate besieged areas following local agreements between the parties are being verified at the time of writing this report. On 1 January the Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered 30,000 polio vaccinations and insulin for 1,000 patients to Douma. Other medications, including injectable medicines and surgical supplies for 17,950 treatments, were denied.

34. In Darayya (Rif Dimashq), about 4,000 people remain besieged. No assistance reached Darayya during the reporting period. People in the area were last assisted in October 2012.

35. In Yarmouk, about 18,000 people remain besieged. During the reporting period, UNRWA delivered food parcels to 2,544 people, hygiene kits to 2,540 people, 629 jerry cans (including water) and 4,000 polio vaccines to Yarmouk. In addition, medical assistance was provided to 280 patients. Syrian authorities authorized the distribution of medical supplies, including antibiotics and medicines for chronic and non-communicable diseases for the fifth consecutive month. The deterioration in the security environment interrupted critical humanitarian operations. The UNRWA distribution area was struck on several occasions as a result of fighting in the vicinity of the distribution site, including on 12 and 25 December, when UNRWA staff were present and forced to evacuate.

36. In Nabul and Zahraa, about 26,500 people are besieged by opposition forces. No humanitarian assistance has reached the two villages since 8 May 2014.

**Free passage of medical supplies, personnel and equipment**

37. During the reporting period, WHO delivered medicines and medical supplies for 483,918 people across the country, including 196,616 cross line to Homs and Rif Dimashq governorates. WHO planned deliveries to eight opposition-controlled locations in Aleppo governorate that could not proceed in December owing to insecurity and are planned for distribution in January 2015. At the time of writing, the convoy has not yet despatched. UNICEF reached another 30,000 people in Qudsaya, Rif Dimashq, with primary health care through the delivery of emergency health kits; 27,000 women and children were treated at UNICEF fixed and mobile clinics in all 14 governorates.

38. Access to medical supplies and equipment continued to be restricted by insecurity and constraints imposed on humanitarian operations by parties to the conflict. During the reporting period, WHO continued to implement and follow up on requests that were submitted during October and November 2014 to access opposition-controlled and hard-to-reach areas in Dar`a, Rif Dimashq and Deir ez-Zor governorates. The approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was obtained to send three WHO shipments to the opposition-controlled towns of Douma, Madaya and Moadamiyet in Rif Dimashq through the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, but only one could proceed (Madaya). The other two remain pending. The shipment to Madaya was delivered on 11 December, including medical supplies, communicable and chronic disease medicine and treatment for Myiasis outbreak. Injectable medicines and surgical supplies were denied.

39. Attacks on medical facilities and personnel continued during the reporting period. In December, Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) documented eight attacks on medical facilities. Six were by Government forces and two by unknown forces. Three attacks occurred in Idlib governorate, two in Dar`a governorate and one each in Aleppo, Deir ez-Zor and Rif Dimashq governorates. Three attacks were by missiles and rockets, two by car bombs, two by barrel bombs and one by aerial bombardment with unknown weapons. PHR also documented the deaths of seven medical personnel during December, all of whom were killed by Government forces and were targeted or killed in the line of duty. Three personnel were killed by shelling and bombing, three by torture and one by execution.

40. The tenth polio immunization campaign took place between 30 November and 4 December 2014, during which 2.95 million children under the age of five were vaccinated across the country, including in hard-to-reach and opposition-controlled areas. Some were vaccinated for the first time. A total of 65,411 children were reached in hard-to-reach areas in Rif Dimashq, Aleppo, Hama and Homs governorates. Coverage rates exceeded 90 per cent in most governorates. Lesser coverage was obtained in Rif Dimashq, Idlib, Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor owing to insecurity.

**Administrative procedures**

41. No changes in administrative procedures were made during the reporting period. The movement of supplies to hard-to-reach areas continued to be negotiated on a case-by-case basis centrally through meetings of the joint committee established following the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014). The committee includes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, security personnel, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the United Nations. Despite a verbal communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 7 September that governors in Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Idlib could authorize inter-agency cross-line convoys, central approval continued to be sought. This led to significant delays in the approval of some convoys.

42. As at 31 December, 27 United Nations visas or visa renewal requests remained pending, 11 within the 15-working-day limit and 16 exceeding the 15-working-day limit. There are 16 pending visas for international NGOs.

43. During the reporting period, three additional national NGOs were authorized to partner with agencies of the United Nations system — two in Hama and one in Ladhiqiyah. There are now 110 national NGOs working with United Nations agencies through 168 branches throughout the Syrian Arab Republic. On 18 December, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs approved, through the Emergency Response Fund, one project with a national NGO in Homs, which had been pending for over a year.

44. International NGOs continue to be unable to conduct independent or joint needs assessments; most cannot open sub-offices; and they are not authorized to partner with national NGOs or participate in inter-agency cross-line convoys or United Nations field missions.

**Safety and security of staff and premises**

45. On 3 December 2014, two mortars landed 500 metres from the Safir hotel in the Hamra area of Homs city, where the United Nations hub is located and United Nations international staff reside. All United Nations staff are safe.

46. On 11 December, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device was detected by the security forces in the Kafr Sousseh district of Damascus, where UNHCR offices are located.

47. The UNRWA distribution area in Yarmouk was struck by gunfire on several occasions during the reporting period, with mortars and other ordnance landing nearby, including on 12 and 25 December, when UNRWA staff were present and forced to evacuate. The staging area in Bateekhah was similarly affected.

48. During December 2014, NGOs reported that three field staff were detained in northern Syria.

49. On 7 December 2014, a United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) vehicle, stolen by non-State armed groups during the kidnapping of 45 peacekeepers in August, was used in Dar'a as a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. This is the first time that a stolen United Nations vehicle was used in such an attack.

50. Thirty-one United Nations staff members, of whom 28 are UNRWA staff, continue to be detained or missing. The total number of humanitarian workers killed in the conflict since March 2011 is 69. This includes 17 United Nations staff members, 40 Syrian Arab Red Crescent staff members and volunteers, 7 Palestinian Red Crescent Society volunteers and staff members and 5 international NGO staff members.

**Observations**

51. There has been no improvement in the situation within the Syrian Arab Republic, despite repeated calls for the parties to the conflict to respect and protect civilians. Humanitarian conditions continue to deteriorate rapidly. Attacks with barrel bombs and explosive weapons continue to be carried out in civilian neighbourhoods, killing and maiming large numbers of people. Some 212,000 people remain besieged, deprived of food, health care and protection. Hospitals and facilities providing basic services have been attacked. Humanitarian deliveries are still prevented from reaching the large number of people who desperately need help.

52. As Syrians, nearly half of them displaced, suffer through another bitter winter, I remind the Security Council that funding for United Nations agencies and their partners has not kept pace with the needs, despite the generosity of many donors. The United Nations winterization plan, launched in October 2014, remains $70 million underfunded. Humanitarian organizations must receive the resources required to enable them to save more lives and support the Syrian people.

53. I have repeatedly said that ways must be found to de-escalate the violence and a political solution is urgently needed to help improve the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic. The Syrian Arab Republic's neighbours have not been spared the significant economic, social and other consequences of the conflict.

54. I welcome initiatives, such as the Russian one, that would launch a credible, comprehensive and inclusive political process, put an end to the crisis and achieve the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people. My Special Envoy continues to search for new openings, the Geneva communiqué remaining an important reference point. I remain extremely concerned about the deteriorating situation in Aleppo and throughout the country with the increased fighting in the last month, while negotiations with relevant parties on the establishment of a freeze continue. It is completely unacceptable that the people of the Syrian Arab Republic continue to face grave abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law by the parties to the conflict and that they are denied access to the basic requirements for their survival.